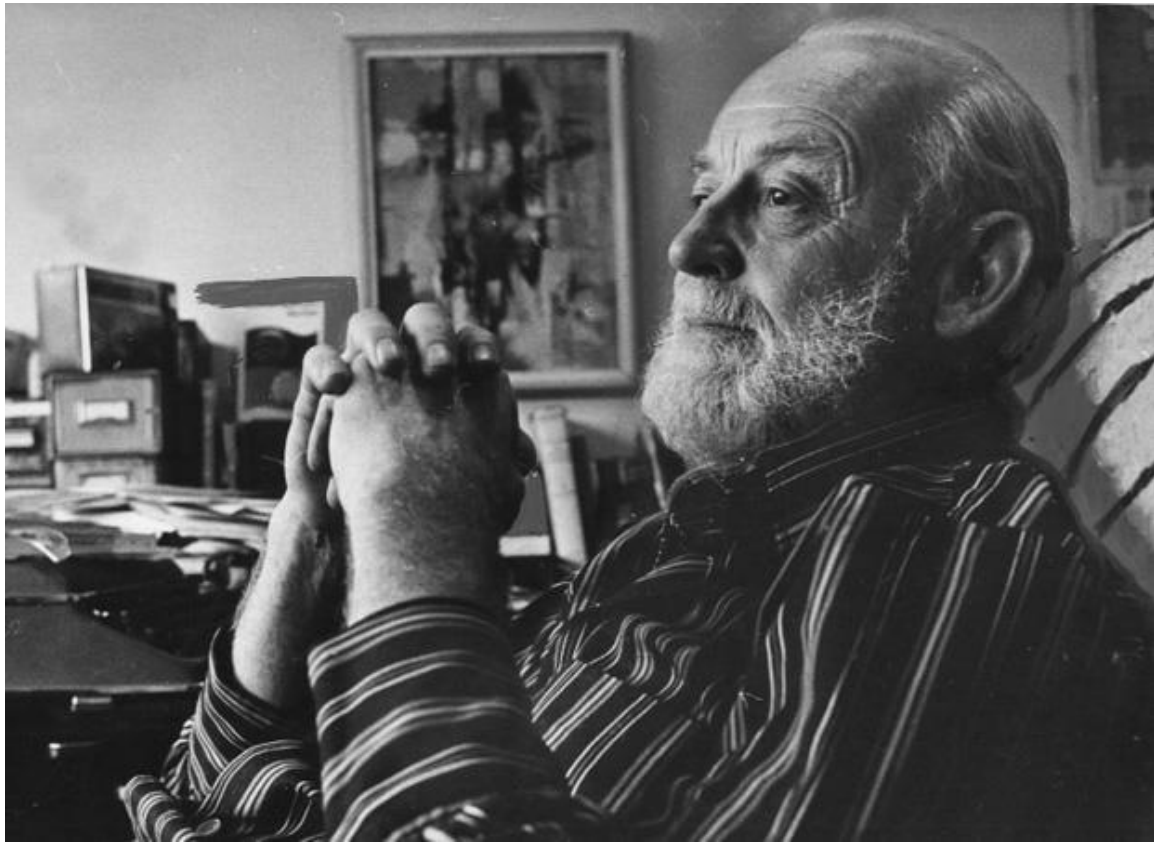


Poetic Voice Magazine



Volume Two: Summer 2019

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Obelisk Press
Vancouver, BC, Canada

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Cover picture: Earle Birney, circa 1970

If you have a submission for the **Poetic Voice Magazine** feel free to contact the magazine.

The editor can be contacted through

pbruskiewich @ gmail.com

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Poetic Voice Magazine Welcomes Submissions

Obelisk Press of Vancouver is proud to publish this second volume of ***Poetic Voice Magazine*** which serves to feature the work of aspiring poets.

Poetic Voice Magazine welcomes submissions on a quarterly basis.

Please feel free to submit your poetry to

pbruskiewich @ gmail.com

There is no fee to submit. There is no writer's fee provided by the journal for those who submit. The publishing rights remain with the writer.

The Theme for the next volume, the fall 2019 edition of ***Poetic Voice Magazine*** is *Poetry and War*.

Editor's Prologue

The Theme for this second volume of *Poetic Voice Magazine* is *Love in All Its Splendour*.

In this edition we introduce a new section called *Featured Poem* with Earle Birney's 1941 poem *Vancouver Lights*. Somewhat of a radical, Birney nonetheless wrote poignant poetry which one can enjoy without being drawn into his ultra-left wing views. Birney might be considered an avant-garde Canadian poet. A picture of Earle Birney (circa 1970) is featured on the magazine cover.

In the *Poetic Commentary* section we have Limericks and the Saturday Evening Post by William Webster, Lwob by Patrick Bruskiewich and the extended essay The Methods of Poetry: rhythm and meter, rime, and images by R. Kirk and C. M. Kirk.

In the *New Works* section there are to be found new works by poet Wing Wing Fung, Tatum Barrie and Isabel S. of Vancouver, as well as by William Webster of New York. There are also several poems written by our magazine editor.

There are other sections to *Poetic Voice Magazine* that features poems from *Modern Day Poems* by John McCrae who is best known for his poem In Flander's Fields (which will be featured in the Fall 2019 edition of Poetic Voice) and Lucy Maud Montgomery who is famous for her Anne of

Avonlea books. In the ***Pre-Modern Poetry*** section there are poems worth knowing from by William Blake and John Milton.

In the ***Renaissance Poetry*** section we have a poem by St. John of the Cross and a second poem by Francesco Petrarca. We shall feature more Petrarchic poetry in future editions of *Poetic Voice Magazine*.

In the section ***Ancient Poetry*** there is an excerpt Book One of the *Illiad* from Homer. We shall feature more of Homer's poetry in future editions of *Poetic Voice*.

We hope you enjoy the poems selected for this edition of our magazine.

Featured Poem

Vancouver Lights by Earle Birney

About me the night ... moonless ... wimples the mountains
wraps ocean ... land ... air ... and mounting
sucks at the stars ... The city ... throbbing below
webs the sable peninsula ... The golden
strands overleap the seajet ... by bridge and buoy
vault the shears of the inlet ... climb the woods
toward me ... falter ... and halt ... Across to the firefly
haze of a ship on the gulps erased horizon
roll the lambent spokes of a lighthouse

Through the feckless years we have come to the time
when to look on this quilt of lamps is a troubling delight
Welling from Europe's bog ... through Africa flowing
and Asia ... drowning the lonely lumes on the oceans
tiding up over Halifax ... now to this winking
outpost comes flooding the primal ink

On this mountain's brutish forehead with terror of space
I stir of the changeless night and the stark ranges
of nothing pulsing down from beyond and between
the fragile planets ... We are a spark beleaguered
by darkness this twinkle we make in a corner of emptiness
how shall we utter our fear that the black Experimentress
will never in the range of her microscope find it? Our Phoebus

himself is a bubble that dries on Her slide while the Nubian
wears for an evening's whim a necklace of nebulae

Yet we must speak we the unique glowworms
Out of the waters and rocks of our little world
we conjured these flames hooped these sparks
by our will ... From blankness and cold we fashioned stars
to our size and signaled Aldebaran
This must we say whoever may be to hear us
if murk devour and none weave again in gossamer:

.... These rays were ours
we made and unmade them ... Not the shudder of continents
doused us ... the moon's passion ... nor crash of comets
In the fathomless heat of our dwarfdom ... Our dream's combustion
we contrived the power the blast that snuffed us
No one bound Prometheus Himself he chained
and consumed his own bright liver ... O stranger
Plutonian descendant or beast in the stretching night—
there was light

1941

Poetic Commentary

Limericks and the Saturday Evening Post by William Webster

The Saturday Evening Post is running a limerick contest. The Saturday Evening Post is giving away a \$ 25 prize for the best limerick. To learn more about this contest you can go to

<https://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/limerick-contest/>

What is a limerick? A limerick is a short five line poem with a simple rhyming scheme. It is an uneven poetic rhyme stuck between the four stanzas and six stanza popular poetic forms. Here are a few examples of limericks:

This is a Valentine's Day Limerick I heard when I was at NYU

*Rose are red
Violets are blue,
As I lay here in bed
I think only of you
... why aren't you here beside me?*

Here are two pieces by Shakespeare found in his 1623 play *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* that might pass as limericks:

*Who is Sylvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heavens such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.*

*Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness,
Love doth to her eyes repair
To help him of his blindness,
And, being helped, inhabits there.*

Depending how you read the opening to this poem by William Blake, the first stanzas might be considered a limerick

*Auguries of Innocence
To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
The hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.*

The rest of Blake's poem seems to be a tail pinned to the beginning.

Here is something limerical from Robert Browning:

For me, I touched a thought, I know

*Has tantalized me many times,
(like turns of thread the spiders throw
Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go*

Or a chorus from John Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* from 1697

*With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assume the God
Affects the nod.
And seems to shake the spheres*

You can also have a bit of fun with a poem by changing its alliteration. For instance here is *How Roses Came Red* by Robert Herrick, but read a different way:

*Rose at first were white, till they could not agree
Whether my Sappho's breast or they more white should be
But being vanquished quite, a blush their cheeks bespread;
Since which, believes the rest
... the roses first came red.*

Does the *War of the Roses* come to mind when you hear this poetic limerick?

I ask my poet friend Patrick to share with me some of the limericks he submitted to the Saturday Evening Post. Here are three of them

*There was a great dinosaur name Rex
Who was a bit of a tyrannosaurus, lest
any creature doubt him he said
think of my poor cousin instead,
now extinct ... Tripasaurus hex.*

*There was a mistress named Daisy
Whose lifestyle was somewhat lazy,
She spent all days on her back
And all nights in the sack,
Driving unwitting men absolutely crazy.*

*There was a fine girl named Mary,
Who could be a person quite contrary
During the day she tended her sheep
But at night could not sleep but a peep
The wolf was the ol' games keeper ... the creep!*

I invite you to submit your limericks to the Saturday Evening Post!

Lwoh ... by Patrick Bruskiewich

I saw the best of my generation
forgotten and pushed aside by arrogance
dragged through the streets by the
mad, the mean the angry mixed
tripsters, occupying the centre of town
the dark dynamo, with tattered
morals, that matched their ripped
jeans and torn skirts, churning up the
grass, and smoking it too
scattering their cigarettes butts,
like they meant something. It's enough
to make you sick ...Yacketty! Yacketty!
where is the syntax and measure
of good human prose? Not here
amongst the unwashed, who don't
use soap and could care less.
This can't be real Ginsberg. Look into
the Mirror. The Circus is in town,
and you're the main attraction. No dreams
at all, just a lot of care less and less
and less. We're not safe, and now we're in
the soup and you're a bunch of cannibals
out to get us. We have no place to hide
you're hunting us, satyrs out for blood

And why? Because you can. You're mad.
You're mean. You're angry.
You are monsters lwoh

Lwoh ... A Commentary

This poem was written in response to the amorphous and faceless *Occupy Movement* was doing its mindless politics on the streets of Vancouver. I checked the calendar to see whether it was 1968 and wondered if this was Chicago or Paris.

I was not surprised to see that the *Occupy Movement* grew out of Vancouver for beneath the surface of this city for there are a few 'tripsters' ready to be mean and arrogant and mean ...

*I saw the best of my generation
forgotten and pushed aside by arrogance
dragged through the streets by the
mad, the mean the angry mixed
tripsters, occupying the centre of town*

The *Occupy Movement* sprang up shortly after I publicly called into question the backroom politics of a political Goliath here in Vancouver who had arranged for 76 +1 honorary degrees to be given his friends by UBC (The Yamamoto-Suzuki Affair) and after I asked the question whether the

political Goliath may have participated in the riots in Chicago during the 1968 Democratic Convention. This political Goliath runs a Foundation which is in fact a Political Action Committee patterned after American Political Action Committees. He also uses it as a tax haven.

The *Occupy Movement* set up its tent on the north side of the Vancouver Art Gallery and proceeded to ‘uglify’ the place. It was like the 1960’s all over again ... to the nostalgic bent of the political Goliath ... hippydippydom ...

*the dark dynamo, with tattered
morals, that matched their ripped
jeans and torn skirts, churning up the
grass, and smoking it too
scattering their cigarettes butts,
like they meant something. It’s enough
to make you sick ...*

And what was their *raison d’etre*? Their reason to exist? What did the ‘tripster’s want? To this day no one really knows ...

*Yacketty! Yacketty!
where is the syntax and measure
of good human prose?*

well, hell, we would all like to be able to live in Vancouver. It is a paradise on Earth, and an expensive one at that, why because everyone and their dog

want to live here, and don't want to pay the high costs of living in Vancouver. But was that the real reason they set up their ashram? Or was it a nostalgic reoccurrence of the 1960's thing of hipsters and Vietnam draft dodgers ...

*... Not here
amongst the unwashed, who don't
use soap and could care less.
This can't be real Ginsberg. Look into
the Mirror. The Circus is in town,
and you're the main attraction.*

It was a circus, and there were hurt and harm among the performers ...overdoses and the like. It was an unhealthy place within the very heart of a healthy Vancouver. The people watching the circus tried hard to understand what it was all about, but with the passage of time and the unsanitary conditions the City of Vancouver had to finally step in (after a overdose death) and ask the circus to move on. It is now illegal to set up a tent city within the City of Vancouver.

The reference to Ginsberg is also hinted to in the title which is *Howl* spelt backwards. When you read Ginsberg's poem *Howl* there is a meaning of sorts. I wonder if this could be said about the *Occupy Movement*. Even the left wing and self-declared progressives began to hold their noses after a few weeks of the tent city.

*... No dreams
at all, just a lot of care less and less
and less.*

This could not be a reoccurrence of the 1960's in the truest sense ... for in the 1960's there was a purpose behind the protest .. bring an end to an unpopular war in Vietnam. That was the dream of the 1960's: *Make Peace ... Not War!*

*... We're not safe, and now we're in
the soup and you're a bunch of cannibals
out to get us.*

When the more strident in the Occupy Movement spoke it was evident that they were wanting to put the world into a pot and boil it into a soup¹ They were out to get the world ... like a bunch of cannibals.

On the few occasions that I happen to be near the Vancouver Art Gallery I would hurry past the tent city ... it was not welcoming to even a man with a green hat and cane, gray long hair, wearing sandals and woolen socks.

*... We have no place to hide
you're hunting us, satyrs out for blood
And why? Because you can.*

While I am bohemian the 'tripsters' with the *Occupy Movement* were not.

You're mad.

You're mean. You're angry.

You are monsters lwoh

There was not love in their heart but the complete opposite:

Make War not Peace!

The Methods of Poetry: rhythm and meter, rime, and images

We have said that poet “teaches” and “delights,” by stirring the reader to an unusual pitch of excitement and by making all the discordant elements of his mind and body move together in perfect harmony. But what is the poet’s secret, that he, with only the materials of the daily round of existence which we all share, can render back to us a heightened sense of the significance of our lives together with a more serene detachment? The answer is – we do not know. We know simply that the poet probably does respond to what is going on about him more finely, more deeply, and with more variety than most of us do; we know further, that together with a delicate emotional nature the poet has a power to organize and arrange his thoughts and to fit them into ordered words; we suspect that his instinct for form not only helps the poet relieve his inner tension, but also enhances his original experience. Which moment was more precious to Wordsworth – when the host of golden daffodils burst upon him as he walked beside the lake, or when, long afterwards, the vision became material for poetry, and flashed ‘upon the inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude’?

*And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the daffodils.*

The daffodils in the poem are singled out; irrelevancies have disappeared. The meaning of the experience is felt and has achieved permanency through form, not only in the mind of Wordsworth, but in the minds of all who read the poem. The freshness, the surprise of the daffodils in early spring is

caught forever, while the memory of the actual walk died when Wordsworth died. “The emotion of art is impersonal,” says T. S. Eliot. It has its life in the poem itself, not in the personal biography of the poet. The only word we have to explain this transformation of personal feeling into the complete and perfect poem is “form.”

What we mean by the word can best be discovered by a further consideration of the elements of form – rhythm and meter, rime, and images. But we must also remember that there are no definite and fixed laws to help us. “In English, by the Grace of God and the Muses, the poetry makes the rules, nit the rules the poetry,” says Saintsbury. Repeated and sympathetic reading of a poem leads one to tentative observations as to how it is organized, and curiously enough these observations as to the form of a poem usually bring one to a deeper and more satisfying understanding of its meaning. For form and meaning are inextricably bound together; in a sense, the one is the other.

Let us select Milton’s poem On Time for such a reading, and let us approach it pencil in hand, prepared to mark and underline it in any way we please. But first let us read and re-read it, until a general sense of its meaning has been borne in upon us, and we feel fairly satisfied with our way of rendering it aloud.

*Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race,
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy Plummets pace;
And glut thy self with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more that what is false and vain,
And meerly mortal dross;*

*So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all, thy greedy self consum'd,
Then long Eternity shall grant our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine.
With Truth, and Peace, and Love shall ever shine
About the supreme Throne
Of him, t'whose happy-making sight alone,
When once our heav'nly-guided soul shall clime,
Then all this Earthly grosnes quit,
Attir'd with Stars, we shall for ever sit
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time.*

After one has enjoyed to the full saying aloud these resounding lines, while they are still echoing in one's mind, one begins to realize that Milton is dealing with a problem which has always fascinated poets and scientists alike, the problem of time. His is, in the poem, placing Time in its relation to Eternity and doing it so effectively that, though the lines are for the most part of a regular alternating heavy and light stress throughout, the pitch and intensity with which one reads them change from a nervous, almost irritable impatience while one is still concerned with Time, to a serene calm when one mounts with the poet to Eternity itself, there at last to triumph over Death and Chance and Time. The metrical scheme of the lines is stretched and enlarged by the rhythmic urge which animates the whole.

Notice that though the two lines

Fly envious Time, till thou run out thy race

and

Attir'd with Stars, we shall for ever sit

Have each ten syllables and five stresses, we read them with a more solemn tone and a more deliberate emphasis because of our sense of the slowly emerging meaning of the poem. The meter is fairly regular, except for the three stress lines which do not break the meter, for one fills out these lines with pause. The rhythm, however, is varied and shifted by the sense of the poem, which every reader will respond to with slightly different stress, for the thought itself may be said to have a sort of rhythmic urge, quite apart from the metrical scheme of the lines. It is, in fact, this never ending conflict between the meter of the line and the rhythm of the whole which gives to this poem, and to all poems, poetic intensity.

But there are other ways in which Milton “organizes” the poem, besides his use of meter and rhythm. Let us read the poem again. Beginning with impatience earth-bound, confused, we finally are wafted into remote and shining regions where everything

*Is sincerely good
and perfectly divine*

Dividing the poem directly into two parts of ten lines each come the “individual kiss” of long Eternity, which frees us from our bonds. Notice

that the rime scheme which Milton uses varies as the emotions mounts. Though the poem sweeps us along in one unbroken sentence with no complete stop until Time has been vanquished, we might, if we like, consider the first two sets of four lines as two units each marked by its own rime scheme. Milton's riming in this poem follows no established rules at all; its effectiveness makes us realize his power to create form for his own purposes. The second four line unit gains a kind of high and proud defiance by urging the reader through the two short intervening lines in order to bear down on the word *gain*, answering with such firmness to *vain*. These two units are then followed by five sets of riming couplets which whirl us up to the "supreme Throne," and there with the support of our final unit of four lines, linked as our second unit was linked, we find ourselves in a freer, milder atmosphere where Time cannot endure. Again the form fills out the meaning and the meaning gives the form significance, and that is the purpose of rime – to make secure, more firm, more concentrated, the intricately bound thought, which is always attempting to free itself.

Besides Milton's subtle use of rhythm, meter, rime, he makes a demand upon our power of seeing, which is another demand of form. One cannot see Time, Eternity, Joy, Truth, Peace, Love, Death and Chance, and yet in this soaring poem, as in the music of Bach, as in the paintings of El Greco, something visual accompanies our enjoyment of the mounting thought. Perhaps the fact that Time is addressed directly – "run out thy race," "glut thy self with what thy womb devours" – gives us a sense of large and shrouded figures of allegorical sort on a canvass varying from stormy dark to shining light. Visualize one must; it is probable that our images are never

more than approximately akin to those in the mind of the poet. The important thing is that by calling upon our power to summon up the actual color and shape of the figures involved we thereby are made to feel more completely the final serenity, when “our heavenly-guided soul” shall sit “attir’d with Stars,” triumphant over Death and Chance and Time. Though the images are intentionally shrouded in this poem, the words themselves have a clarity and precision which cancel the vagueness of the images. One loves to pronounce the words, especially the vowels, as distinctly as possible, each one presenting itself as peculiarly perfect. We do not merely imagine that the very sounds of the words fit themselves to the nervous impatience of “Fly envious Time, till thou run out they race,” with its array of sharp vowels, and that the l’s of the next line are actually heavy. There is a fullness and roundness to the line, “And Joy shall overtake us as a flood”; there is a special pleasure in hearing the last phrase of the poem, “and thee O Time,” chime with the first. The poet’s power to fit the very sounds of words to the mood of the poem is an aspect of the poet’s sense of organic form, which can never be precisely defined because it varies in each poem.

It is form which gives a poem “life.” Quite apart from the actual daily life of the poet. Who knows – and indeed does it matter? – what personal reasons moved Milton with such truly divine words to express for us our mortal defeat in terms of Time, our immortal triumph in terms of Eternity? The poem is “impersonal”; it has what is called form. And now let us examine in more detail each of the four aspects of form touched on here – rhythm and meter, rhyme and images – remembering that it is not a mechanical sort of

form, dependent on rules, which interests us, but form which grows out of the thought itself, or, as Coleridge would say, “organic form.”

Rhythm

John Livingston Lowes, in an interesting lecture on Shelley’s poetic methods, based on a series of Shelley’s revisions of a single poem, pointed out that the poet in his first sketch for his poem marked out the time with dashes, and only filled in with an occasional word. More words took their place among the dashes as the rhythm became established in his mind and he felt his way towards an articulate expression:

*O world! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more – Oh, never more!*

Notice the heavy drag of the first two lines; the balance and poise of the third, which in the next line is gathered together in one despairing question – “When will return the glory of your prime?” – to sink away at last into utter dejection. The strong rhythmic feeling of Shelley’s mood came to him before the words were found to give it expression. It is rhythmic feeling, then, that we must ourselves first respond; the poem will yield its meaning gradually as we surrender ourselves to its emotion.

The physiological fact that we are ourselves creatures of rhythm is the reason we are able to share in the rhythmic expression, and thence in the

thought and feeling, of the poets of all ages. Our breathing, our walking, the tempo with which we type a letter, is rhythmic, slow or rapid, regular or disjointed, according to the mood which we are unconsciously expressing in every gesture. Rhythm, then, underlies all life; it is not confined to art alone, and it may be defined as that in us which responds to recurrent time intervals. As in music and dancing, so in poetry, time is the chief factor. It was in terms of time that Shelley found expression for his melancholy mood, and it is in terms of time that we come to share his mood.

Not only is there a definite rhythm to each line to which one responds as completely as one can; there is also a rhythm to the whole, and this is indicated by the stanzas, by refrains, by words repeated, by the thought enlarged and finally brought to a close. The second stanza – and there are but two – of this poem reflects back upon the first stanza when we reread the whole and subtly influences our way of modulating our voices. And for this reason one must read the poem again and again, that the whole may play upon each part, backwards and forwards.

*Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more – Oh, never more!*

The resignation, the exhaustion, of the second stanza, makes the line, “No more – Oh! Never more!” sound on our ears more sadly than the same line at the end of the first stanza. One reads in the first time with less finality, with

something of an upward urge; one read it the second time with the quiet, even tone of despair.

To D. H. Lawrence “the hidden emotional patter” of poetry, the rhythm shaped by the feeling of the poet, was more important than meter:

I think more of a bird with broad wings flying and lapsing through the air, than anything, when I think of meter ... it all depends on the pause – the natural pause, the natural lingering of the voice according to the feeling – it is the hidden emotional pattern that makes poetry, not the obvious form.

and this ‘hidden emotional pattern’ is the pattern of rhythm.

Meter

Metrical pattern, however, seems to be essential to transport us to the level of consciousness experienced by the poet himself, to enable us to share the thoughts and emotions which are beyond our ordinary range. Rhythm marks prose as well as poetry; meter, or regularity of time parts within a line, is the distinguishing sign of poetry one has only to repeat with exaggerated emphasis Lawrence’s sentence above to observe that it has no regular pattern of sound. For the sake of the contrast, repeat Shelley’s stanzas. The time-pattern is very regular; each stanza is made up of two three-stress lines, followed by two five-stress lines, and ending with three-stress lines. Perhaps irregular rhythmic patterns, such as those used by D.H. Lawrence himself, and many other writers of free verse, will final displace the more regular metrical organization of traditional verse. But it is not probable, since the

physiological fact remains that in moments of excitement our speech, our gestures and steps fall into a more definite marked rhythm, and poetry is the language of strong feeling. Though we enjoy free verse very much, our enjoyment is essentially that of our pleasures in rhythmic prose.

But to say that meter is essential to poetry is not to say that the poet is bound by an unalterable metric pattern. Though the beat of Shelley's poem is strong and firm, it only approximates an exact rhythm which we feel subconsciously should be there; though the meter seems clearly defined for a line or two, it is swiftly shifted only to regain its original pattern. For the principle behind all art, which is always a struggle between inner spontaneity and outer control, is that the rigidity of the scheme be constantly modified by the life which flows through it. After two lines of alternating unstressed and stressed syllables, Shelley, for instance, reverses his pattern and writes

*Trembling at that where I had stood before
When we return the glory of your prime
No more – Oh, never more.*

The first foot in each of these lines begins with a stressed syllable, perhaps to make us feel the physical strain of the weary climb. In spite of this irregularity of meter, we stay close enough to the established pattern to feel the variation only as deeply satisfying conflict between the urge of the emotion and control of the form. And it is in this conflict, shifting and changing with every line, that the pleasure of reading poetry aloud is found. Should one read "O world! O life! O time!" with a mounting emphasis, or

should one almost ignore the stress on “whose” in the next line, and place a borrowed emphasis on “last,” which actually does not carry the stress? How long should one pause at the end of lines 1 and 2, and the beginning of line 5? For a whole beat, silently felt? The answer depends on the reader’s age, his temperament, his mood for the moment, for he, with the poet, is the “creator,” by means of his rhythmic expressiveness, of the poem which merges.

It is clear, then, that though we mark all the stresses of a line in the same way, no two stresses are precisely alike. We shall, however, use the word “foot” in our discussion of various familiar meters to indicate a certain number of syllables in a unit, for one’s perception of the basic rhythm of the poem is enlarged by training one’s ear to hear more accurately the different patterns used by English poets. They are

Iambus: One unstressed and one stressed syllable

Impé / rious Cáo/ sar deád/ and túrned/ to cláy.

Trochee: One stressed and one unstressed syllable

Creép in / tó thy / narrow / béd.

Spondee: two stressed syllables

The gráy séa / and the loíg / blaák haíd

Anapest: Two unstressed and one stressed syllable

I am lórd / of the fówl / and the brúte.

Dactyl: One stressed and two unstressed syllables.

Swiftly walk / óver the/ Weéstern wave.

The first three kind of feet are sometimes called “duple” rhythm, each beat representing two counts. This is the rhythm of walking. The last two kinds of feet are often called “triple” rhythm, and may be compared to waltzing. Very little experience in reading poetry teaches one that poetry is not a matter of syllable counting. But a certain amount of syllable counting actually seems to make one’s ear more sensitive to the organic rhythm underlying the whole.

English verse was strongly marked by meter long before rime was considered a necessary adornment of poetry. Though there has not been a revival of the alliterative verse of Anglo-Saxon and Middle English poetry since the fourteenth century, blank verse which came into vogue with the great Elizabethan dramas, is till the favorite meter for full bodied, dignified poetry. Perhaps the essential reason for the hold of this five-stress iambic line is simply that it does not fall apart into two equal halves, as the four- and six-stress lines are always in danger of doing. For instance, observe the four-stress line:

*Bind úp, bind úp, your yéllow háir
And tíe it ón your néck;
And seé you loók as máiden-líke
As the dáy that wé first met*

And now consider the six-stress line:

*Then lábour ín the deép mid-ócean, wínd and wáve and oár;
O reést ye, bróther Maíneárs, we will not wánder móre*

Nor has the five-stress iambic line the song-like quality of the three-stress line,

*Háil to thée, blithe spírit!
Bírd thou néver wért –
Thát from héaven or néar it
Pouérest thý full héart.*

But probably the real glory of blank verse is that, though the iambic beat of the ten-syllable line is maintained, the pressure of the thought is felt filing out the lines with its own strength, disregarding rime, letting the pauses fall where they will, often, indeed, shifting the meter from iambic to trochee or to spondee. Orthello's greating to Desdemona when she joins him in Cyprus illustrates the variety, the plasticity, the strength of blank verse.

ORTHELLO:

*It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy
If after every tempest comes some calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!
And let the laboring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high, and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven! If it were not to die,
'T were now to be most happy; for, I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute*

*That not another comfort like this
Succeeds in unknown fate.*

DESDEMONA:

The heavens forbid ...

One observes, in the first place, that one pauses only for the fraction of a second at the end of the first line, that the real pause comes at the middle of the second. But notice, too, that Shakespeare does not let us stray too far from the rhythmic effect of the pause at the end of a line. For the next three lines the pause and the line end together and then we mount again, and with

*... the laboring bark climb hills of seas
Olympus-high, and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven.*

Then a long pause, the longest in the speech, for here the mood shifts, and Orthello begins again in quite a different key, as though he was conversing with himself:

*If it were now to die
'T were now to be most happy; I fear,
My sole hath her content so absolute
That not another comfort like to this
Succeed in unknown fate.*

And Desdemona quickly takes him up, filling out the line with.

The heavens forbid.

One observes, in the second place, that Shakespeare does not maintain the regularity of his stressed and unstressed syllables for long, but gives us a sense of variety of rhythmic conversation by a quick change of pattern

*It gives me wonder great as my content
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!*

By disregarding the stress entirely at times, or else by letting it fall lightly, the poet keeps us from feeling the artificiality of meter:

May the winds blow until they have weaken;d death.

Neither *the* nor *they* are strong enough to bear the stress nor are they required to do so, for the essential time beat is maintained by the rhythm of the whole passage.

The language of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton, and many others found scope in the freest and yet most sustained of English meters. The greatest of the Elizabethan drama rests in part on the fact that the dramatists discovered the strength and range of the blank verse by matching impassioned language to the meter of poetry, and by lending to poetry the naturalness of prose.

Rime

The greater part of English verse since the time of Chaucer has been rimed – that is to say, the stressed vowels and the following consonants are alike at the end of two or more lines of verse. Rimes are frequently arranged in pairs

or couplets (aa, bb, cc, dd, and so forth), or else alternately (abab). There may be variations and combinations of these two principles. Such as; ababab, ababcc, abababcc; and so forth. In quatrains, alternate lines are somewhat left rimed, thus; xaya. Let us now consider why it is that one's ears are pleased by rime, which is, after all, not essential to poetry, as rhythm and meter are.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the iambic pentameter line of blank verse was written in rhythmical couplets and was called "heroic" verse, though it sounds less heroic to our ears than blank verse. Sir John Denman, standing on Cooper's Hill in 1642, looked down on the swiftly-flowing but self-contained Thames and thought of the river as a perfect example of how noble verse might be made to flow:

*O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear, though gentle yet not dull,
Strong with rage, without-o'er-flowing full.*

One notices at once that the pauses coincide with the ends of the lines, though in each line there is also a definitely marked pause in the middle; one observes that the stresses fall on the important words and that there is only a slight disparity between the rhythmic emphasis which the reader is moved to place upon the lines and the metrical stresses of the lines. And this is one of the chief reasons for rime, that it marks clearly the metric pattern. The conflict between rhythm and meter is almost resolved in the heroic couplet; the result is that one does not feel any very strong emotion and is quite

willing to agree that now “sense” and “reason” are in control. Rimed couplets are easier to write than blank verse, for the rimes themselves are pleasantly distracting and the reader demands less of real excellence. Dryden, at the end of the seventeenth century, and many others after him, did indeed add a fresh intellectual quality and sharp satiric turn, which, as Dryden said, “tickles even when it hurts.” Of George Villiers, Second Duke of Buckingham, he wrote:

*Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong
Was everything by starts and nothing long.*

Moreover, Dryden was able to use the same meter to express his mood of lonely doubt, as well as his bursts of personal venom:

*Dim as borrowed beams of moon and stars
To lonely wearing wandering travelers
Is reason to the soul ...*

Though heroic verse stays more serenely within the limits of the line, the conflict between meter and rhythm remains, as it does in all poetry. But in this verse, in contrast to blank verse, the line structure is reinforced by the rime, and the effect is that the grip of the pattern is tightened.

Rime is not only used to make blank verse walk in more orderly heroic couplets, but it is also used to organize groups of lines into stanzas, from the simplest ballad form, really intended to be sung.

In somer when the shawes be sheyne,

*And the lewes be large and long,
Hit is full merry in feyre forests
To here the foulys song.*

to the complicated rime royal, Spenserian stanza, ode sonnet and other patterns. All of these verse forms are different devices to achieve the same end – to reinforce the rhythm of the verse and hence to make more inevitable our understanding of the poem. Though various patterns have names, the truth is that each poet does what he pleases with the inherited form. Since each poet responds to experience in his own way, the conflict he makes us feel between rhythm and meter is in every case essentially unique. Rime is simply another way of tightening the organization of the poem against which the longer rhythm struggles. Listen to the use Wordsworth makes of rime, for instance, in his *Intimations of Immortality*:

*There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The Earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparell'd in celestial light,
the glory and the freshness of a dream.*

How one holds to the rime in this free and drifting rhythm, and how skillfully and quickly Wordsworth shifts his rime schemes:

*The rainbow comes and goes
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair ...*

The conflict between the larger rhythm and the meter is felt more strongly in rimed stanzas than in heroic couplets because the thought in rimed stanzas tends to be more discursive. But this is not a tendency; the real poet, by the very strength of his feelings, bends any form to his use and makes the reader feel, in the very midst of the conflict between spontaneity and control, the power of poetry.

Images and Words

We have said that organic form is the essence of poetry; that because of our common human response to rhythm, made stronger by the meter and rime, the poet and the reader of poetry are able to share experience. What we wish to seize from this sharing of experience is a kind of truth, the poet's truth, and this, after all, is said to us in words, not in rhythm.

Because of the heightened emotional state of the poet, his words are never entirely abstract; because of our heightened emotional state when we read the poem, we are able – we hardly know how – to understand the abstract truth behind the concrete pictures the poet gives us. For the poet's language is the language of imagery, and his images, perfect and satisfying as they are, always represent a truth, not matter how simple, no matter how difficult to translate again into abstract words. It is for the sake of this truth, which Keats says is the same as beauty, that we are eager to enter completely into the thought of a poem.

Though the language of poetry is images, the vocabulary of poetry is the vocabulary we hear around us. Wordsworth settled the question nearly a hundred and fifty years ago when he issued a blast against “poetic” words in his famous *Preface*, and declared that he was going to use “a selection of language really used by men.” At the same time Wordsworth hoped to cast over his words “a certain colouring of imagination whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual fashion.” By the strength of the feeling of the poet ordinary words are made to sing themselves into our hearts and to speak their meaning. Masfield, in *Cargoes*, gives us two stanzas of “poetic” language, and then, in the third, makes use of “the language really used by men,” over which “a certain colouring of imagination” has been cast.

*Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.*

*Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.*

*Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack,
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.*

Though the vocabulary of the third stanza may be said to be less “poetic” than the first two, the sounds of the last stanza are actually just as beautiful. By the sharp contrast of the images, Masfield makes us understand the romantic feeling with which he observes British ships in the Channel on a windy March day.

Presenting to us familiar images in our daily language, the poet is able by the way in which he groups and associates words and images to cast “a certain colouring of the imagination” over ordinary things and thus to express truth to us. For we emerge finally with a sense of having understood what before we missed, and having extended the realms of our awareness. As John Livingston Lowes puts it, “Poetry starts from the actual and ends in the true.”

Keats tells us in one of his letters, that he spent a morning in a somewhat moody state of mind, listening to a song of a nightingale in a nearby tree. A simple prose statement of how he sat in the garden listening to the bird does not tell us what really happened in the transition from “the actual” to “the true.” It can be said only in poetry; it can be said only by images:

*My headaches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk.*

And we, with Keats, sink Lethe-wards, release our hold on the world about us, and let the song of a bird lead to a comprehension of – what? Let us listen first, and let each image form itself in our minds:

*Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.*

The bird, invisible, is a “light-winged Dryad of the trees.” The very metaphor, together with the reference to hemlock, and to Lethe, reminds us that birds are singing as freshly many centuries ago as they are now. Their unchanging music helps us to leave the present world unseen, and to “fade away into the forest dim,”

*Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan.*

“Thou the dull brain perplexes and retards,” the song of the invisible bird is enough to release Keats, to release us, to let him “fly to thee” ...”on the viewless wings of poesy.” For now the garden in which Keats is seated has become remote:

*I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs.*

But in “embalmed darkness,” a darkness made sweet by “the grass, the thicket and the fruit-tree wild,” does Keats, in his mood of restlessness, let the sound of the bird’s song lead him further and further away from the “actual,” nearer and nearer to the “true,” which, in this poem, is an apprehension of the meaning of the death of the individual:

*Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death ...*

*Now more than ever seems it rich to die
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,*

And the immortality of beauty itself:

*Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that ofttimes hath
Charm’d magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.*

The song of the bird, and all associations which cluster around the song in Keat’s mind, have led him in terms of imagery to a comprehension of the relation between our transitory selves and all the imperishable beauty of the world, a comprehension which we share as we ourselves, led by Keats as he was led by the bird, enter the “forest dim” of our own minds and emerge again into the actual world, deepened and harmonized:

Fled is that music: - do I wake or sleep?

Just as we can never hope to recapture the exact rhythmic stress with which Keats read over his poem, so we can never see the same images. Our images of the flowers in the garden, “fast fading violets cover’d up in leaves,” and of Ruth

*... when, sick for home
She stood in tears amid the alien corn*

Are different from the images in Keats’ mind. No matter. The point is that we too create the images as vividly, as wholly, as we can, with as rich association as we are able to evoke – and that the images do give up their meanings to us. For images are the language with which the poet expresses the truths of his heart; all that the poet has enjoyed and suffered, all that he observed, will be fused and distilled again by this “image-making faculty,” which Sir Philip Sidney says is the very mark of the poet.

Why this should be so we do not know. We do know, however, that after moments of excitement, when our minds and emotions seem to be deeply involved, we are apt to call up again isolated images stored in our imaginations – the gesture of a hand, the quality of a voice – which forever symbolize for us the whole experience. The poet, finer in his responses, richer in his power of association, must be able by means of these symbols to fuse the experience for us into one perfect unity, making us feel the abstract in the concrete, and the concrete in the abstract, and thus to give

meaning to our otherwise not quite realized lives. Coleridge's description of "the streamy nature of association which thinking curbs and rudders," helps us to understand the mental process of the poet searching for expression, in which images are integral parts, not superimposed ornaments with which the poet adorns the poem. How better, except by associating the song of an invisible bird to undying music, could Keats have told us that, though we die, beauty is never vanquished? Evoking images of familiar sights and sounds, the poet makes us feel their import by suggesting the shadowed truth which they express. Using words that are thoroughly familiar to us, he so orders them that they reverberate in our minds and suggest more than words can ever say explicitly.

Poetry, then, does not make us experience directly the feeling of love, or hate, or hunger, or humiliation, or relief; by a process only partially understood the poet takes these emotions known to us all, and bodies them forth in ordered words. By responding as fully as we can to the demands made upon us by poetry to hear it, and see it, and share in its mood, we ourselves learn indirectly the meaning of these basic emotions. Like the poet, we feel a new inner harmony which makes us at once more detached from the world about us and more completely part of it. The terms of poetry which we have been discussing here – rhythm, meter, rime, and images – are only words which we use to describe an experience of concentrated intensity, the exact nature of which we do not understand. True form is a part of the very life of the poem itself. As Coleridge wrote in his essay on "Shakespeare, a Poet Generally":

The form is mechanic, when on any given materials we impress a pre-determined form, not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material; - as when to a mass of wet clay we give whatever shape we wish it to retain when hardened. The organic form, on the other hand, is innate; its shapes, as it develops, itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form. Such as the life is, such is the form. Nature, the prime genial artist, inexhaustible in diverse powers, is equally inexhaustible in forms; – each exterior is the physiognomy of the being within – its true image reflected and thrown out from the concave mirror.

{excerpt from: *Types of English Poetry*, R. Kirk and C. M. Kirk, The Macmillan Co. New York, 1940, p. 15 – 35}

New Poems

The Self Confined Gate by Wing Wing Fung

A notion of freedom
a thought that controls ...
You can't release the burden
for it consumes the heart tolls.

The self contained gate
that fuels your hate ...
For no longer i think straight
i'm easily phased.

The training of self
to not dwell in human hell ...
to look past mindless thoughts
has eased you a great lot.

I Wish I Could ... by William Webster

It is the city that never sleeps
The *Big Apple* – but I wish it would.
It is so noisy, it keeps
me awake at night, I wish I could ...
sleep. If you live here you need

all the rest you can get, believe
me. Living here is a test of character, a keen
measure of whether or not you can thrive
amidst the hustle, and the bustle ...
of the killer taxis cabs, and the pot holes
that devour them, the uncaring throngs
that act like mindless zombies, bumping
into each other on the sidewalks –
it is the day of the sleepless dead!

Things Take Time by Tatum Barrie

Things take time,
But why can't we live fast and free,
Time can wait for me,
On the right side of faith,
I've got a dream still left to see,
In this reality.

Unreciprocated Love by Tatum Barrie

Let me save you from yourself,
For a lil' while,
If I catch you obsessin',

See you stressing',
Take my only blessing',
I created to give ya,
My real & true loving',
If the feeling' get too strong or overwhelming',
Let's get back to relaxing',
Kick it with me share my passion,
This essence can't be distant,
Unreciprocated love could lead to devastation.

The Eternal Meadow by Isabel S.

The waning winter light paints
the brevity of the sleepy meadow
in a peculiar lilac hue as
forget-me-nots doze
to recollections of dreams long passed.

To the north, guided by a softly undulating down,
meanders a brook sweet to a parched palette.
And an old-growth wood cradles
the remaining perimeter of the secluded meadow
in easy indigos and docile mauves. T

he garrulous call of a lone and distant chickadee
is reminiscent of a vague but fond memory,
and a sense of comfortable anonymity
billows over me like the relief of exhaling stale smoke.

I imagine all life here must be born anew,
frolicking on unacquainted legs
with every golden morning.
I should wish I may spend the rest of my days here
in this moment of eternal serenity.

But alas, the current of time trickles on,
setting me adrift to what is yet to be....

Some Poems by Patrick Bruskiewich

There for the Grace of God Go I

There for the grace of god go I
.to step the fields, and crosses count
lay down your life for me!
but I shall not forget

The guns no longer speak

your youthful cries are din
you have not grown old, as we
but I shall not forget

Forgotten names and far off places
reasons long lost in time,
and me no sacrifice in kind
but I shall not forget

In air, at sea and on the ground
some battles won and some lost
progress made at too dear a cost
but I shall not forget

Primo no nocere, I am told
by those who won and now grow old
their wisdom alive here in my heart
but I shall not forget

Born a day long past
the wars that would not last
brothers now, no bone contend
but I shall not forget

There for the grace of god go I
to step the fields, and poppies pick

crimson red, reminders still
but I shall not forget.

We Had Braved the North Atlantic Run

Death came swift at sea
We lost our ship did we
The Focke-Wulf bombed us
Enemy Action ... sunk us

It circled our ship at dusk
With only a machine gun
Our defense ... the bastard Hun
Shattered my bridge with cannon fire

My first mate died at my side
... then its calculated run
It flung at us, a hungry cat at mouse
I rung up speed ... turned my ship ...

THIS IS IT BOYS!

From a distance we saw it come, fast
and furious, the drop ... the deed was done
We had braved the North Atlantic Run

We the brave had lost.

Five hundred pounds the bomb it was
Plunged at us and hit
A horrid flash, the noise
The smoke ... it exploded amidships.

This our purgatory on earth
The devil is our friend, the hissing
of a thousand vipers, the escape of steam
Abandon Ship! Abandon Ship!

My stockers climbed the steep stairs
Up from the engine room ablaze
Leaving the dead behind in hell. Scalded
soaked in oil, into the icy sea they plunged

One last message to the world
before spark's electricity fades
“CQ... CQ Come Quick!”
We sink ... all is lost ...”

Then the lowering of the boats, we race to
scramble down off our ship. One last time
We leave our lives behind
From now its borrowed time.

Then the final show, the ship we loved
The naked keel, modesty gone
Our ship ... proud Cynthia slipped
into the sea ... her bow dived steep.

The evil plane done flew away
to kill another day ... the Hun had Won!
We had braved the North Atlantic Run
We the brave had lost.

Then silence, the sea wrapped around us.
... it hide us from the sun.
Our long ordeal had now begun
We drifted countless days on days.

The hours passed, the long nights,
The cold, the anguish, the dieing
All brave men ... the stench of oil,
Burnt flesh and gore ... the cry mother I am to die.

The fact that I am here
to tell my solemn story
meant you had come in time
and saved me from me glory

The Hun hangs around my neck
like some dead albatross.
Let me sail another day,
give me another ship

Once again I'll brave the North Atlantic Run
Give me the tools and I shall finish the job
No bastard Hun will kill me off
If not for myself ... then old England

Bring on the Rain

The smell it came before the rain
as powerful as the clouds. The sky
itself did not stay unchanged.
It moved without a sound.

The day, well, the day stood still
unlike the clouds that hurried past.
The mist broke upon the hill
the haze, the vapour, would not last.

And in the sky the horrid sun
bore down upon the world. It fought
a battle it might have won

were it not fleeing from its lot.

The cursed sun, be gone, be gone
the damage you have done ... leave ...
Bring on the rain, the torrential
rain, the unmitigating run.

Joy Blossoms Forth

At birth there was a precious seed
no bigger than a mote of fluff
from whence there grew with term
a sprig, much cherished and beloved.

The water, earth, sun and wind
lent this little babe its life.
From this small sprig there grew
the majesty of beauty and of youth.

With the passage of scarce time
the sprig became a bush then tree.
Its branches sprouted forth and buds
appeared, proclaiming loss of innocence.

Upon this gentle tree then sprang

leaves set against the bursting winds
which nourished so sweet a thing
first issued forth this month of march.

Such beauty did then blossom forth!
Oh sweet flower stay with us awhile
I beg you not to float to earth, before
I have a chance to share my love.

What guise is this, this pink fragrance
that scatters forth upon the breeze?
It is unsullied snow, I think,
gracious and lovely as herself.

At birth there was a precious seed
no bigger than a mote of fluff
from whence there grew with term
a sprig, much cherished and beloved.

Here today for such brief time
kept as remembrances tomorrow.
A sad flower never blossoms full.
Life is too short to abide in sorrow.

As the water, earth, sun and wind
helped the gentle tree to grow

so too will hope and love
lift a sad heart to paradise.

The cherry blossoms only when
life is radiant and feelings warm
Existence springs from happy thoughts
True beauty floats above the world.

When your heart is sad, remember
somewhere not far above your woe
there is a paradise of love in which
you will find a peaceful friend.

The Strong Have Conquered Us the Weak

We know despair, we always do
Through the loss of beauty, something sacred.
A goddess perhaps keeps watch so
Nemesis does, in due course we are punished.

Grand monuments crumble, our city disappears
Dark shadows overtake the light.
The hollow wind wails in anguish, the end is near
Before long we shall lose our fight.

We are mortal! The passage of time seems endless.
Our thoughts once writ are easily forgotten, so they say.
So let us etch them in stone and make them priceless
This shall outlast our lives by many a day.

But once the last of us has spoke
Who then can understand of what we speak?
Our lives, our loins drift away like smoke
The strong have conquered us the weak

They castrate us, then cut out our tongue.
Our offspring are cast in the river
they roast those parts from us that they have rung
The rest wait their fate, in fear they weep and shiver

Our broken shields they pound to ploughs
The gold we called our own recast
their king in time becomes renown
and our fate becomes a long forgotten past.

Many centuries hence you'll stand
where once I bled, a testament to life.
Left to whither in the sun, to a last man
we all, staked to suffer a tortuous strife.

The buzzards have gathered to pick our bones

Our flesh has cooked here in the sun
They fight amongst the ruins of our homes
Their boundless feast has just begun.

A Soft Carpel from Which it Sips

The bee rubbed its abdomen
into the rich and succulent
Pollen, in complete abandon
in ecstasy, its thorax bent.

Rich nectar oozing from its tip.
It is delirious with its joy,
a portulent aft its nip,
but snatched up, no mere boy.

Its grand stinger's unsheathed
all rubbed raw but never used.
This cautious pointy beast
keeps himself busily amused.

His Nessus – a pink tulip
broad and unopened, a soft
carpel from which it sips.
Here's its stellation and its loft.

Nothing will bother this bee
not light, nor push, nor sway
It peers at all it sees
a thousand times its way.

Ah, this is its place
Here's its fuzz, its perch
where it dances in its daze
bares all in orgasmic lurch.

Oh, but if you poke your nose
unwelcomed in its private lair
if by chance you get too close
watch out – its best bee wary.

A is for Adolescent Angst

A is for adolescent ... Angst
B is for bawdy ... biology
C is for constant ... conflict
D is for damn ... dumb
E is for endless ... ennui
F is for fuddle ... duddle ... (I thought you said that!)
G is for gee ... Go to

H is for Hell (after you ...)
I is for innocent ...indeed!
J is for Juliette ... my sweet Juliette ...
K is for knot ... knowing ...
L is for love ... or is it lust?
M is for mummm ... munchies
N is for naughty ... neophyte ...
O is for Ohhh organelles ...
P is for psst ...you know what
Q is for ... quiff ...
R is for Romeo ... Romeo ... where is my Romero?
S is for Wee ... Willie ... Shakespeare
T is for torture ... torment
U is for ... you know ... that strong muscle ...
V is for ... that place south of Regina
W is for wild ... Wild ... WILD
X is for sex ... rated ...
Y is for why ... why not ...
Z is for zy ... zy ... zygote ...

That's It!

That's it!
I looked into the mirror
And what looked back?

I did not recognize them ...

The face is long.

The skin

all pale and dimpled –

no longer childish

no longer young and pink

The eyes ... two worried eyes

peered back, like the dark side

of the moon, poke marked and

streaked ... no longer perfect.

Let me go back ...

a year,

a month,

A week ...

a day ..

that zit

It stares at me ...

a third eye

an ogre ... it's a droll ...

it wasn't there last night

I washed and scrubbed

And washed again
but it's here this morning

that zit

Go ... hide me away
And leave me be
I can't go out
Like this ...

Don't laugh
can't you see
my life's at an end
it's all over

that's it.

Yo, William!

It's a new world of words for me
Big words, strange words, words that
are old English. A great while ago
the world began, oh can't we bury it away

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

But when I was a wee tiny lad,
I spelt them so, and was told
hey ho ... and a hey nonino ...
go spell them all over again!

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

The poems, the prose, the plays
ancient grudges! How now ... Spirit!
... wither wander you? The witless
Wit wonders over hill over dale ...
all the way to hell!

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

But those words they eclipse, the ancient
worlds of Egypt, of Rome, of Jerusalem ...
art a joke! A play .. a play ... My kingdom
for a play, by the bawdy bard!

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

A Merchant, a shrew, star-crossed lovers
such whore-able things ... what's the Puc?
hey ho ...the wind and the rain,

Let's play and shake our speares

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

I may be only fifteen, and still
growing up but learn me the words
And teach me their meaning,
give me great cur age, want wit

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

Come come King Lear, even
We fools know that he that
Has a house to put his head in
has a good head-piece!

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

When that I was a wee tiny boy
With hey ho, ... the wind and the rain;
A foolish thing was but a toy,
But now I'm growing up ,, hey ho

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

And therefore take the present time

With a hey, ho, and a hey nonino
For love is crowned with the prime
In the spring time the only pretty ring time

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers like the spring. With a
Hey ho the wind and the rain
Let us play Shakespeare again.

{Refrain :} Yo, William!

Titania

Queen of the Midsummer's
Princess of the Faeries
God has blessed her
With jewels that sparkle,
Orbs that titillate
And set men to lunacy.
Such splendor doth
Make Oberon jealous
Lest men do stray by moonlight.
She is Titanic ... with

Her Play on words,
Her puns, her linguistic fun
But! Prey tell, anger
Her nought for she
Shall lock wits with
The witless and leave
You less a man ...
A unique, cocklebind
And you the fool
Shall shake your speare
At her, then realize
Too late it has been thrown!
Come what might
She shall get to the
Bottom of it all
Of that is certain!
Sweet Titania, pink and white,
Dance your dance for us tonight
Fill the air with pixie dust
And magical perfumed lust
The centaurs, satyrs and minotaurs
With you in sight, will
Leave such marked appetite.
Let them then peer up to
The moon and thank heaven
For your graces, before seek thee

that other other place, your throne
where Cleopatra's envy
doth remind us that the Nile,
the fountain of life, is the
Aethiop's jewel, so much more
Splendid then that paltry bauble
Hung upon mere mortal men
And Soft, we know with certain that
She Titania is our Faerie Queen.

Modern Day Poetry



John McCrae, at home in Ontario in 1912

An Anthology of Poems by John McCrae

Anarchy

I saw a city filled with lust and shame
Where men, like wolves, slunk through the grim half-light;
And sudden, in the midst of it, there came
One who spoke boldly for the cause of Right.

And speaking, fell before that brutish race
Like some poor wren that shrieking eagles tear,
While brute Dishonour, with her bloodless face
Stood by and smote his lips that moved in prayer.

"Speak not of God! In centuries that word
Hath not been uttered! Our own king are we."
And God stretched forth his finger as He heard
And o'er it cast a thousand leagues of sea.

Quebec

1608 - 1908

Of old, like Helen, guerdon of the strong –
Like Helen fair, like Helen light of word, –
“The spoils unto the conqueror belong.

Who winneth me must win me by the sword.”

Grown old, like Helen, once the jealous prize
That strong men battled for in savage hate,
Can she look forth with unregretful eyes,
Where sleep Montcalm and Wolfe beside her gates?

The Unconquered Dead

“ ... defeated, with great loss.”

Not we the conquered! Not to us the blame
Of them that flee, of them that basely yield;
Not ours the shout of victory, the fame
Of them the vanquished in a stricken field.

The day of battle in the dusty heat
We lay and heard the bullets swish and sing
Like scythes amid the over-ripened wheat,
And we the harvest of their garnering.

Some yielded. No, not we! Not we, we swear
By these our wounds; this trench upon the hill
Where all the shell-strewn earth is seamed and bare,
Was ours to keep; and lo! We have it still.

We might have yielded, even we, but death
Came for our helper; like a sudden flood
The crashing darkness fell; our painful breath
We drew with gasps amid the choking blood.

The roar fell faint and farther off, and soon
Sank to a foolish humming in our ears,
Like crickets in the long, hot afternoon
Among the wheat fields of the olden years.

Before our eyes a boundless wall of red
Shot through by sudden streaks of jagged pain!
Then a slow-gathering darkness overhead
And rest came on us like a quiet rain.

Not we the conquered! Not to use the same,
Who hold our earthen ramparts, nor shall cease
To hold them ever; victors we, who came
In the fierce moment to our honoured peace.

The Hope of My Heart

*Delicta juventutis et ignorantius ejus, quo esumus ne memineris, Domine.**

I left, to earth, a little maiden fair,
With locks of gold, and eyes that shamed the light;
I prayed that God might have her in His care
And sight.

Earth's love was false; her voice, a siren's song;
(Sweet mother-earth was but a lying name)
The path she showed was but the path of wrong
And shame.

"Cast her not out!" I cry. God's kind words come –
"Her future is with Me, as was her past;
It shall be My good will to bring her home
At last."

** Lift the ignorance of what we keepers remembered, Lord*

The Anxious Dead

O guns, fall silent till the dead men hear
Above their heads the legions pressing on:
(These fought their fight in time of bitter fear,
And died not knowing how the day had gone.)

O flashing muzzles, pause, and let them see

The coming dawn that streaks the sky afar;
Then let your mighty chorus witness be
To them, and Caesar, that we still make war.

Tell them, O guns, that we have heard their call,
That we have sworn, and will not turn aside,
That we will onward till we win or fall,
That we will keep the faith for which they died.

Bid them be patient, and some day, anon,
They shall feel earth enwrapt in silence deep;
Shall greet, in wonderment, the quiet dawn,
And in content may turn them to their sleep.

A Song of Comfort

"Sleep, weary ones, while ye may –
Sleep, oh, sleep!"
Eugene Field.

Thro' May time blossoms, with whisper low,
The soft wind sang to the dead below:
"Think not with regret on the Springtime's song
And the task ye left while your hands were strong.
The song would have ceased when the Spring was past,

And the task that was joyous be weary at last."

To the winter sky when the nights were long
The tree-tops tossed with a ceaseless song:
"Do ye think with regret on the sunny days
And the path ye left, with its untrod ways?
The sun might sink in a storm cloud's frown
And the path grow rough when the night came down."

In the grey twilight of the autumn eves,
It sighed as it sang through the dying leaves:
"Ye think with regret that the world was bright,
That your path was short and your task was light;
The path, though short, was perhaps the best
And the toil was sweet, that it led to rest."

The Pilgrims

An uphill path, sun-gleams between the showers,
Where every beam that broke the leaden sky
Lit other hills with fairer ways than ours;
Some clustered graves where half our memories lie;
And one grim Shadow creeping ever nigh:
And this was Life.

Wherein we did another's burden seek,
The tired feet we helped upon the road,
The hand we gave the weary and the weak,
The miles we lightened one another's load,
When, faint to falling, onward yet we strode:
This too was Life.

Till, at the upland, as we turned to go
Amid fair meadows, dusky in the night,
The mists fell back upon the road below;
Broke on our tired eyes the western light;
The very graves were for a moment bright:
And this was Death.

Disarmament

One spake amid the nations, "Let us cease
From darkening with strife the fair World's light,
We who are great in war be great in peace.
No longer let us plead the cause by might."

But from a million British graves took birth
A silent voice -- the million spake as one --
"If ye have righted all the wrongs of earth
Lay by the sword! Its work and ours is done."

Equality

I saw a King, who spent his life to weave
Into a nation all his great heart thought,
Unsatisfied until he should achieve
The grand ideal that his manhood sought;
Yet as he saw the end within his reach,
Death took the sceptre from his failing hand,
And all men said, "He gave his life to teach
The task of honour to a sordid land!"
Within his gates I saw, through all those years,
One at his humble toil with cheery face,
Whom (being dead) the children, half in tears,
Remembered oft, and missed him from his place.
If he be greater than his people blessed
Than he the children loved, God knoweth best.

Eventide

The day is past and the toilers cease;
The land grows dim 'mid the shadows grey,
And hearts are glad, for the dark brings peace
At the close of day.

Each weary toiler, with lingering pace,
As he homeward turns, with the long day done,
Looks out to the west, with the light on his face
Of the setting sun.

Yet some see not (with their sin-dimmed eyes)
The promise of rest in the fading light;
But the clouds loom dark in the angry skies
At the fall of night.

And some see only a golden sky
Where the elms their welcoming arms stretch wide
To the calling rooks, as they homeward fly
At the eventide.

It speaks of peace that comes after strife,
Of the rest He sends to the hearts He tried,
Of the calm that follows the stormiest life –
God's eventide.

In Due Season

If night should come and find me at my toil,

When all Life's day I had, tho' faintly, wrought,
And shallow furrows, cleft in stony soil
Were all my labour: Shall I count it naught

If only one poor gleaner, weak of hand,
Shall pick a scanty sheaf where I have sown?
"Nay, for of thee the Master doth demand
Thy work: the harvest rests with Him alone."

Isandlwana

Scarlet coats, and crash o' the band,
The grey of a pauper's gown,
A soldier's grave in Zululand,
And a woman in Brecon Town.

My little lad for a soldier boy,
(Mothers o' Brecon Town!)

My eyes for tears and his for joy
When he went from Brecon Town,
His for the flags and the gallant sights
His for the medals and his for the fights,
And mine for the dreary, rainy nights
At home in Brecon Town.

They say he's laid beneath a tree,
(Come back to Brecon Town!)
Shouldn't I know? -- I was there to see:
(It's far to Brecon Town!)
It's me that keeps it trim and drest
With a briar there and a rose by his breast –
The English flowers he likes the best
That I bring from Brecon Town.

And I sit beside him -- him and me,
(We're back to Brecon Town.)
To talk of the things that used to be
(Grey ghosts of Brecon Town);
I know the look o' the land and sky,
And the bird that builds in the tree near by,
And times I hear the jackals cry,
And me in Brecon Town.

Golden grey on miles of sand
The dawn comes creeping down;
It's day in far off Zululand
And night in Brecon Town.

Mine Host

There stands a hostel by a travelled way;
Life is the road and Death the worthy host;
Each guest he greets, nor ever lacks to say,
"How have ye fared?" They answer him, the most,
"This lodging place is other than we sought;
We had intended farther, but the gloom
Came on apace, and found us ere we thought:
Yet will we lodge. Thou hast abundant room."

Within sit haggard men that speak no word,
No fire gleams their cheerful welcome shed;
No voice of fellowship or strife is heard
But silence of a multitude of dead.
"Naught can I offer ye," quoth Death, "but rest!"
And to his chamber leads each tired guest.

Penance

My lover died a century ago,
Her dear heart stricken by my sland'rous breath,
Wherefore the Gods forbade that I should know
The peace of death.

Men pass my grave, and say, "'Twere well to sleep,
Like such an one, amid the uncaring dead!"
How should they know the vigils that I keep,
The tears I shed?

Upon the grave, I count with lifeless breath,
Each night, each year, the flowers that bloom and die,
Deeming the leaves, that fall to dreamless death,
More blest than I.

'Twas just last year -- I heard two lovers pass
So near, I caught the tender words he said:
To-night the rain-drenched breezes sway the grass
Above his head.

That night full envious of his life was I,
That youth and love should stand at his behest;
To-night, I envy him, that he should lie
At utter rest.

Recompense

I saw two sowers in Life's field at morn,

To whom came one in angel guise and said,
"Is it for labour that a man is born?
Lo: I am Ease. Come ye and eat my bread!"
Then gladly one forsook his task undone
And with the Tempter went his slothful way,
The other toiled until the setting sun
With stealing shadows blurred the dusty day.

Ere harvest time, upon earth's peaceful breast
Each laid him down among the unreaping dead.
"Labour hath other recompense than rest,
Else were the toiler like the fool," I said;
"God meteth him not less, but rather more
Because he sowed and others reaped his store."

Slumber Songs

I

Sleep, little eyes
That brim with childish tears amid thy play,
Be comforted! No grief of night can weigh
Against the joys that throng thy coming day.

Sleep, little heart!
There is no place in Slumberland for tears:
Life soon enough will bring its chilling fears
And sorrows that will dim the after years.
Sleep, little heart!

II

Ah, little eyes
Dead blossoms of a springtime long ago,
That life's storm crushed and left to lie below
The benediction of the falling snow!

Sleep, little heart
That ceased so long ago its frantic beat!
The years that come and go with silent feet
Have naught to tell save this -- that rest is sweet.
Dear little heart.

Captain

Here all the day she swings from tide to tide,
Here all night long she tugs a rusted chain,
A masterless hulk that was a ship of pride,

Yet unashamed: her memories remain.

It was Nelson in the `Captain', Cape St. Vincent far alee,
With the `Vanguard' leading s'uth'ard in the haze –
Little Jervis and the Spaniards and the fight that was to be,
Twenty-seven Spanish battleships, great bullies of the sea,
And the `Captain' there to find her day of days.

Right into them the `Vanguard' leads, but with a sudden tack
The Spaniards double swiftly on their trail;
Now Jervis overshoots his mark, like some too eager pack,
He will not overtake them, haste he e'er so greatly back,
But Nelson and the `Captain' will not fail.

Like a tigress on her quarry leaps the `Captain' from her place,
To lie across the fleeing squadron's way:
Heavy odds and heavy onslaught, gun to gun and face to face,
Win the ship a name of glory, win the men a death of grace,
For a little hold the Spanish fleet in play.

Ended now the "Captain"'s battle, stricken sore she falls aside
Holding still her foemen, beaten to the knee:
As the `Vanguard' drifted past her, "Well done, `Captain'," Jervis cried,
Rang the cheers of men that conquered, ran the blood of men that died,
And the ship had won her immortality.

Lo! here her progeny of steel and steam,
A funnelled monster at her mooring swings:
Still, in our hearts, we see her pennant stream,
And "Well done, `Captain'," like a trumpet rings.

The Dead Master

Amid earth's vagrant noises, he caught the note sublime:
To-day around him surges from the silences of Time
A flood of nobler music, like a river deep and broad,
Fit song for heroes gathered in the banquet-hall of God.

The Dying of Pere Pierre

"...with two other priests; the same night he died,
and was buried by the shores of the lake that bears his name."

Chronicle.

"Nay, grieve not that ye can no honour give
To these poor bones that presently must be
But carrion; since I have sought to live
Upon God's earth, as He hath guided me,

I shall not lack! Where would ye have me lie?
High heaven is higher than cathedral nave:
Do men paint chancels fairer than the sky?"
Beside the darkened lake they made his grave,
Below the altar of the hills; and night
Swung incense clouds of mist in creeping lines
That twisted through the tree-trunks, where the light
Groped through the arches of the silent pines:
And he, beside the lonely path he trod,
Lay, tombed in splendour, in the House of God.

The Harvest of the Sea

The earth grows white with harvest; all day long
The sickles gleam, until the darkness weaves
Her web of silence o'er the thankful song
Of reapers bringing home the golden sheaves.

The wave tops whiten on the sea fields drear,
And men go forth at haggard dawn to reap;
But ever 'mid the gleaners' song we hear
The half-hushed sobbing of the hearts that weep.

The Night Cometh

Cometh the night. The wind falls low,
The trees swing slowly to and fro:
Around the church the headstones grey
Cluster, like children strayed away
But found again, and folded so.

No chiding look doth she bestow:
If she is glad, they cannot know;
If ill or well they spend their day,
Cometh the night.

Singing or sad, intent they go;
They do not see the shadows grow;
"There yet is time," they lightly say,
"Before our work aside we lay";
Their task is but half-done, and lo!
Cometh the night.

The Oldest Drama

"It fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.
And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad,

Carry him to his mother. And . . . he sat on her knees till noon,
and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed. . . .
And shut the door upon him and went out."

Immortal story that no mother's heart
Ev'n yet can read, nor feel the biting pain
That rent her soul! Immortal not by art
Which makes a long past sorrow sting again

Like grief of yesterday: but since it said
In simplest word the truth which all may see,
Where any mother sobs above her dead
And plays anew the silent tragedy.

The Shadow of the Cross

At the drowsy dusk when the shadows creep
From the golden west, where the sunbeams sleep,

An angel mused: "Is there good or ill
In the mad world's heart, since on Calvary's hill

'Round the cross a mid-day twilight fell

That darkened earth and o'ershadowed hell?"

Through the streets of a city the angel sped;
Like an open scroll men's hearts he read.

In a monarch's ear his courtiers lied
And humble faces hid hearts of pride.

Men's hate waxed hot, and their hearts grew cold,
As they haggled and fought for the lust of gold.

Despairing, he cried, "After all these years
Is there naught but hatred and strife and tears?"

He found two waifs in an attic bare;
-- A single crust was their meagre fare --

One strove to quiet the other's cries,
And the love-light dawned in her famished eyes

As she kissed the child with a motherly air:
"I don't need mine, you can have my share."

Then the angel knew that the earthly cross
And the sorrow and shame were not wholly loss.

At dawn, when hushed was earth's busy hum
And men looked not for their Christ to come,

From the attic poor to the palace grand,
The King and the beggar went hand in hand.

The Song of the Derelict

Ye have sung me your songs, ye have chanted your rimes
(I scorn your beguiling, O sea!)
Ye fondle me now, but to strike me betimes.
(A treacherous lover, the sea!)
Once I saw as I lay, half-awash in the night
A hull in the gloom -- a quick hail -- and a light
And I lurched o'er to leeward and saved her for spite
From the doom that ye meted to me.

I was sister to 'Terrible', seventy-four,
(Yo ho! for the swing of the sea!)
And ye sank her in fathoms a thousand or more
(Alas! for the might of the sea!)
Ye taunt me and sing me her fate for a sign!

What harm can ye wreak more on me or on mine?

Ho braggart! I care not for boasting of thine –

A fig for the wrath of the sea!

Some night to the lee of the land I shall steal,

(Heigh-ho to be home from the sea!)

No pilot but Death at the rudderless wheel,

(None knoweth the harbor as he!)

To lie where the slow tide creeps hither and fro

And the shifting sand laps me around, for I know

That my gallant old crew are in Port long ago –

For ever at peace with the sea!

The Warrior

He wrought in poverty, the dull grey days,

But with the night his little lamp-lit room

Was bright with battle flame, or through a haze

Of smoke that stung his eyes he heard the boom

Of Bluecher's guns; he shared Almeida's scars,

And from the close-packed deck, about to die,

Looked up and saw the "Birkenhead"'s tall spars

Weave wavering lines across the Southern sky:

Or in the stifling 'tween decks, row on row,

At Aboukir, saw how the dead men lay;
Charged with the fiercest in Busaco's strife,
Brave dreams are his -- the flick'ring lamp burns low --
Yet couraged for the battles of the day
He goes to stand full face to face with life.

Then and Now

Beneath her window in the fragrant night
I half forget how truant years have flown
Since I looked up to see her chamber-light,
Or catch, perchance, her slender shadow thrown
Upon the casement; but the nodding leaves
Sweep lazily across the unlit pane,
And to and fro beneath the shadowy eaves,
Like restless birds, the breath of coming rain
Creeps, lilac-laden, up the village street
When all is still, as if the very trees
Were listening for the coming of her feet
That come no more; yet, lest I weep, the breeze
Sings some forgotten song of those old years
Until my heart grows far too glad for tears.

Unsolved

Amid my books I lived the hurrying years,
Disdaining kinship with my fellow man;
Alike to me were human smiles and tears,
I cared not whither Earth's great life-stream ran,
Till as I knelt before my mouldered shrine,
God made me look into a woman's eyes;
And I, who thought all earthly wisdom mine,
Knew in a moment that the eternal skies
Were measured but in inches, to the quest
That lay before me in that mystic gaze.
"Surely I have been errant: it is best
That I should tread, with men their human ways."
God took the teacher, ere the task was learned,
And to my lonely books again I turned.

Upon Watt's Picture Sic Transit

"What I spent I had; what I saved, I lost; what I gave, I have."

But yesterday the tourney, all the eager joy of life,
The waving of the banners, and the rattle of the spears,
The clash of sword and harness, and the madness of the strife;
To-night begin the silence and the peace of endless years.

(One sings within.)

But yesterday the glory and the prize,
And best of all, to lay it at her feet,
To find my guerdon in her speaking eyes:
I grudge them not, -- - they pass, albeit sweet.

The ring of spears, the winning of the fight,
The careless song, the cup, the love of friends,
The earth in spring -- - to live, to feel the light -- -
'Twas good the while it lasted: here it ends.

Remain the well-wrought deed in honour done,
The dole for Christ's dear sake, the words that fall
In kindness upon some outcast one, -- -
They seemed so little: now they are my All.

Five Short Poems by L. M. Montgomery



Those familiar with Miss Montgomery's work as a novelist are not surprised that she has also written a volume of poetry. One with her joyous outlook on life, vivid imagination, instinct for words and facility in expression, could not help being a poet. More than that, she lived nearly all her life in Prince Edward Island, where the fairies are said to live. In truth, Miss Montgomery was a poet long before she began to write prose; indeed, it is doubtful if she has ever been anything else, for *Anne Shirley* is essentially a creature of sentiment, of imagination, and of those qualities of heart and brain which are the products of the poetic mind. Her verse is quite as perfect as her prose, though without its human touch; and her lyrics, especially those dealing with the smiling aspect of her native province, its fragrant fields of red earth and the 'blue sea coming up on every side,' are of rare quality, delicate, lilting and full of music.

E. J. Hathaway,
Canadian Poets,
McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart Publishers, Toronto, 1916

IT was in the Fall of 1908 that the editor of this volume read *Anne of Green Gables*, by a new author, L. M. Montgomery. The first edition was just out. The book provided a fresh delight, for Anne had a new and indescribable charm, and it seemed to him that the book must sell in tens of thousands. It has sold in hundreds of thousands, and its immediate successor, *Anne of Avonlea*, 1909, has had almost as phenomenal a sale. Few, however, have known that this brilliant portrayer and interpreter of life in her native island, is a writer of verse of distinctive quality, particularly the poems that picture the sea and the sturdy, ardent fisher folk.

Lucy Maud Montgomery was born at Clifton, Prince Edward Island, but lived from her infancy in Cavendish, of the same province. Her father was Hugh John Montgomery, of Park Corner, P.E.I. a son of the Hon. Donald Montgomery, 'Senator,' and her mother, Clara Woolner Macneill, of Cavendish, a great-granddaughter of the Hon. William Macneill, 'Speaker.' Hector Macneill, the minor Scottish poet, author of the popular lyrics, 'I Lo'ed Ne'er a Laddie but Ane,' 'Saw Ye My Wee Thing,' and 'Come Under My Plaidie,' was a first cousin of her great-great-grandfather.

Until sixteen years of age, she attended the 'district school' in Cavendish, and then went to Prince of Wales College, Charlottetown, for a year, taking the

course for a First-Class Teacher's License. Later, she attended for one winter, Dalhousie College, Halifax, taking special courses in English and in languages.

To supply the eager demand, six other books have quickly followed the first two: *Kilmeny of the Orchard*, 1910; *The Story Girl*, 1911; *Chronicles of Avonlea*, 1912; *The Golden Road*, 1913; *Anne of the Island*, 1915 and the *Watchman and other poems* (McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart), 1916.

In 1911, Miss Montgomery was married to the Rev. Ewan Macdonald, Presbyterian Minister at Leaskdale, Ontario, and is now the mother of two boys.

Shortly after *Anne of Green Gables* was published, the author received a communication from the secretary of Mark Twain, telling her that the latter had just sent a letter to the actor, Francis Wilson, in which he said: *Anne of Green Gables is the sweetest creation of child life yet written.*

When the Dark Comes Down

When the dark comes down, oh, the wind is on the sea
With lisping laugh and whimper to the red reef's threnody,
The boats are sailing homeward now across the harbor bar
With many a jest and many a shout from fishing grounds afar.
So furl your sails and take your rest, ye fisher folk so brown,
For task and quest are ended when the dark comes down.

When the dark comes down, oh, the landward valleys fill
Like brimming cups of purple, and on every landward hill
There shines a star of twilight that is watching evermore
The low, dim lighted meadows by the long, dim-lighted shore,
For there, where vagrant daisies weave the grass a silver crown,
The lads and lassies wander when the dark comes down.

When the dark comes down, oh, the children fall asleep,
And mothers in the fisher huts their happy vigils keep;
There's music in the song they sing and music on the sea,
The loving, lingering echoes of the twilight's litany,
For toil has folded hands to dream, and care has ceased to frown,
And every wave's a lyric when the dark comes down.

Sunrise Along Shore

Athwart the harbor lingers yet
The ashen gleam of breaking day,
And where the guardian cliffs are set
The noiseless shadows steal away;
But all the winnowed eastern sky
Is flushed with many a tender hue,
And spears of light are smiting through
The ranks where huddled sea-mists fly.

Across the ocean, wan and gray,
Gay fleets of golden ripples come,
For at the birth-hour of the day
The roistering, wayward winds are dumb.
The rocks that stretch to meet the tide
Are smitten with a ruddy glow,
And faint reflections come and go
Where fishing boats at anchor ride.

All life leaps out to greet the light –
The shining sea-gulls dive and soar,
The swallows whirl in dizzy flight,
And sandpeeps flit along the shore.
From every purple landward hill
The banners of the morning fly,
But on the headlands, dim and high,
The fishing hamlets slumber still.

One boat alone beyond the bar
Is sailing outward blithe and free,
To carry sturdy hearts afar
Across those wastes of sparkling sea;
Staunchly to seek what may be won
From out the treasures of the deep,
To toil for those at home who sleep
And be the first to greet the sun.

Off to the Fishing Ground

There's a piping wind from a sunrise shore
Blowing over a silver sea,
There's a joyous voice in the lapsing tide
That calls enticingly;
The mist of dawn has taken flight
To the dim horizon's bound,
And with wide sails set and eager hearts
We're off to the fishing ground.

Ho, comrades mine, how that brave wind sings
Like a great sea-harp afar!
We whistle its wild notes back to it
As we cross the harbor bar.
Behind us there are the homes we love
And hearts that are fond and true,
And before us beckons a strong young day
On leagues of glorious blue.

Comrades, a song as the fleet goes out,
A song of the orient sea!
We are the heirs of its tingling strife,
Its courage and liberty.
Sing as the white sails cream and fill,

And the foam in our wake is long,
Sing till the headlands black and grim
Echo us back our song!

Oh, 'tis a glad and heartsome thing
To wake ere the night be done
And steer the course that our fathers steered
In the path of the rising sun.
The wind and welkin and wave are ours
Wherever our bourne is found,
And we envy no landsman his dream and sleep
When we're off to the fishing ground.

The Old Man's Grave

Make it where the winds may sweep
Through the pine boughs soft and deep,
And the murmur of the sea
Come across the orient lea,
And the falling raindrops sing
Gently to his slumbering.

Make it where the meadows wide
Greenly lie on every side,
Harvest fields he reaped and trod,
Westering slopes of clover sod,

Orchard lands where bloom and blow
Trees he planted long ago.

Make it where the starshine dim
May be always close to him,
And the sunrise glory spread
Lavishly around his bed.
And the dewy grasses creep
Tenderly above his sleep.

Since these things to him were dear
Through full many a well-spent year,
It is surely meet their grace
Should be on his resting-place,
And the murmur of the sea
Be his dirge eternally.

The Old Home Calls

Come back to me, little dancing feet that roam the wide world o'er,
I long for the lilt of your flying steps in my silent rooms once more;
Come back to me, little voices gay with laughter and with song,
Come back, little hearts beating high with hopes, I have missed and mourned
you long.

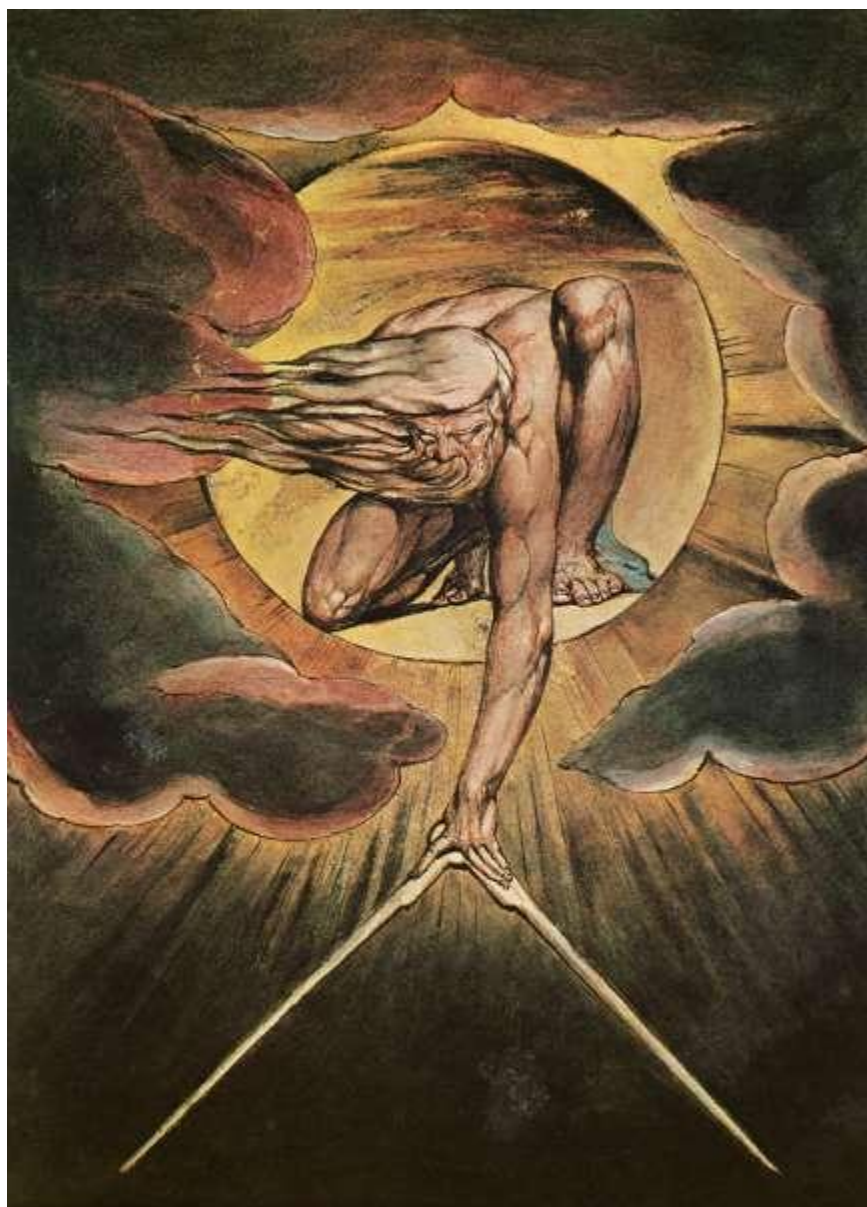
My roses bloom in my garden walks all sweet and wet with the dew,

My lights shine down on the long hill road the waning twilights through,
The swallows flutter about my eaves as in the years of old,
And close about me their steadfast arms the lispings pine trees fold.

But I weary for you at morn and eve, O, children of my love,
Come back to me from your pilgrim ways, from the seas and plains ye rove,
Come over the meadows and up the lane to my door set open wide,
And sit ye down where the red light shines from my welcoming fireside.

I keep for you all your childhood dreams, your gladness and delights,
The joy of days in the sun and rain, the sleep of carefree nights,
All the sweet faiths ye have lost and sought again shall be your own,
Darlings, come to my empty heart – I am old and still and alone!

Pre-Modern Poetry



The Ancient of our Days, Blake 1794, Relief etching with watercolors

Auguries of Innocence by William Blake

To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.

A Robin Red breast in a Cage
Puts all Heaven in a Rage.
A dove house fill'd with doves & Pigeons
Shudders Hell thro' all its regions.

A dog starv'd at his Master's Gate
Predicts the ruin of the State.
A Horse misus'd upon the Road
Calls to Heaven for Human blood.

Each outcry of the hunted Hare
A fibre from the Brain does tear.
A Skylark wounded in the wing,
A Cherubim does cease to sing.

The Game Cock clipp'd and arm'd for fight¹
Does the Rising Sun affright.
Every Wolf's & Lion's howl

Raises from Hell a Human Soul.

The wild deer, wand'ring here & there,
Keeps the Human Soul from Care.
The Lamb misus'd breeds public strife
And yet forgives the Butcher's Knife.

The Bat that flits at close of Eve
Has left the Brain that won't believe.
The Owl that calls upon the Night
Speaks the Unbeliever's fright.

He who shall hurt the little Wren
Shall never be belov'd by Men.
He who the Ox to wrath has mov'd
Shall never be by Woman lov'd.

The wanton Boy that kills the Fly
Shall feel the Spider's enmity.
He who torments the Chafer's sprite
Weaves a Bower in endless Night.

The Catterpillar on the Leaf
Repeats to thee thy Mother's grief.
Kill not the Moth nor Butterfly,
For the Last Judgement draweth nigh.

He who shall train the Horse to War
 Shall never pass the Polar Bar.
The Beggar's Dog & Widow's Cat,
 Feed them & thou wilt grow fat.

The Gnat that sings his Summer's song
 Poison gets from Slander's tongue.
The poison of the Snake & Newt
 Is the sweat of Envy's Foot.

The poison of the Honey Bee
 Is the Artist's Jealousy.
The Prince's Robes & Beggars' Rags
 Are Toadstools on the Miser's Bags.

A truth that's told with bad intent
 Beats all the Lies you can invent.
It is right it should be so,
 Man was made for Joy & Woe;

And when this we rightly know
 Thro' the World we safely go.
Joy & Woe are woven fine,
 A Clothing for the Soul divine;

Under every grief & pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
The Babe is more than swadling Bands;
Throughout all these Human Lands

Tools were made, & born were hands,
Every Farmer Understands.
Every Tear from Every Eye
Becomes a Babe in Eternity.

This is caught by Females bright
And return'd to its own delight.
The Bleat, the Bark, Bellow & Roar
Are Waves that Beat on Heaven's Shore.

The Babe that weeps the Rod beneath
Writes Revenge in realms of death.
The Beggar's Rags, fluttering in Air, ⁷⁵
Does to Rags the Heavens tear.

The Soldier arm'd with Sword & Gun,
Palsied strikes the Summer's Sun.
The poor Man's Farthing is worth more
Than all the Gold on Afric's Shore.

One Mite^o wrung from the Labrer's hands

Shall buy & sell the Miser's lands:
Or, if protected from on high,
Does that whole Nation sell & buy.

He who mocks the Infant's Faith
Shall be mock'd in Age & Death.
He who shall teach the Child to Doubt
The rotting Grave shall ne'er get out.

He who respects the Infant's faith
Triumph's over Hell & Death.
The Child's Toys & the Old Man's Reasons
Are the Fruits of the Two seasons.

The Questioner, who sits so sly,
Shall never know how to Reply.
He who replies to words of Doubt
Doth put the Light of Knowledge out.

The Strongest Poison ever known
Came from Caesar's Laurel Crown.³
Nought can deform the Human Race
Like the Armour's iron brace.

When Gold & Gems adorn the Plow
To peaceful Arts shall Envy Bow.

A Riddle or the Cricket's Cry

Is to Doubt a fit Reply.

The Emmet's^o Inch & Eagle's Mile

Make Lamé Philosophy to smile.

He who Doubts from what he sees

Will ne'er believe, do what you Please.

If the Sun & Moon should doubt

They'd immediately Go out.

To be in a Passion you Good may do,

But no Good if a Passion is in you.

The Whore & Gambler, by the State

Licenc'd, build that Nation's Fate.

The Harlot's cry from Street to Street

Shall weave Old England's winding Sheet.

The Winner's Shout, the Loser's Curse,

Dance before dead England's Hearse.

Every Night & every Morn

Some to Misery are Born.

Every Morn & every Night

Some are Born to sweet Delight.

Some are Born to sweet Delight,

Some are born to Endless Night.

We are led to Believe a Lie
 When we see not Thro' the Eye
Which was Born in a Night to Perish in a Night
 When the Soul Slept in Beams of Light.

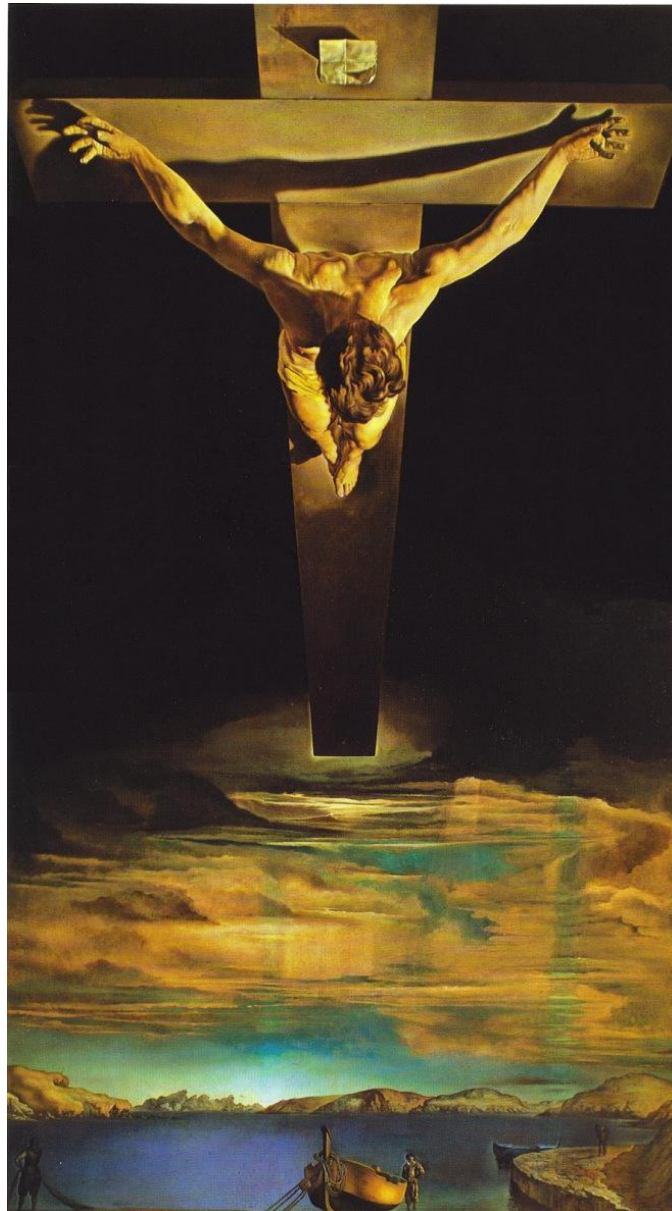
God Appears & God is Light
 To those poor Souls who dwell in the Night,
But does a Human Form Display
 To those who Dwell in Realms of day.

On Time by John Milton

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race,
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast intombed,
And last of all thy greedy self consumed,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss

With an individual kiss,
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood;
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, t' whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heav'nly-guided soul shall climb,
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attired with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time.

Renaissance Poetry



St. John of the Cross by Salvador Dali

The Obscure Night of the Soul by St. John of the Cross

Upon an obscure night
Fevered with love in love's anxiety
(O hapless-happy plight!),
I went, none seeing me,
Forth from my house where all things quiet be.

By night, secure from sight,
And by secret stair, disguisedly,
(O hapless-happy plight!)
By night, and privily,
Forth from my house where all things quiet be.

Blest night of wandering,
In secret, where by none might I be spied,
Nor I see anything;
Without a light or guide,
Save that which in my heart burnt in my side.

That light did lead me on,
More surely than the shining of the noontide,
Where well I knew that one
Did for my coming bide;
Where He abode, might none but He abide.

Oh night that didst lead thus,
Oh night more lovely than the dawn of light,
Oh night that broughtest us,
Lover to lover's sight,
Lover with loved in marriage of delight!

Upon my flowery breast
Wholly for Him, and save Himself for none,
There did I give sweet rest
To my beloved one;
The fanning of the cedars breathed thereon.

When the first moving air
Blew from the tower and waved His locks aside,
His hand, with gentle care,
Did wound me in the side,
And in my body all my senses died.

All things I then forgot,
My cheek on Him who for my coming came;
All ceased, and I was not,
Leaving my cares and shame
Among the lilies, and forgetting them.

A Complaint by Night of the Lover Not Beloved by Petrarca

Alas, so all things now do hold their peace!

Heaven and Earth disturbed in no thing;

The beasts, the air, the birds their songs do cease,

The nightes car the stars about doth bring;

Calm is the sea; the waves work less and less:

So am not I, whom love, alas! Doth wring,

Bringing before my face the great increase

Of my desires, whereat I weep and sing,

In joy and woe, as in a doubtful case.

For my sweet thought sometime do pleasure bring;

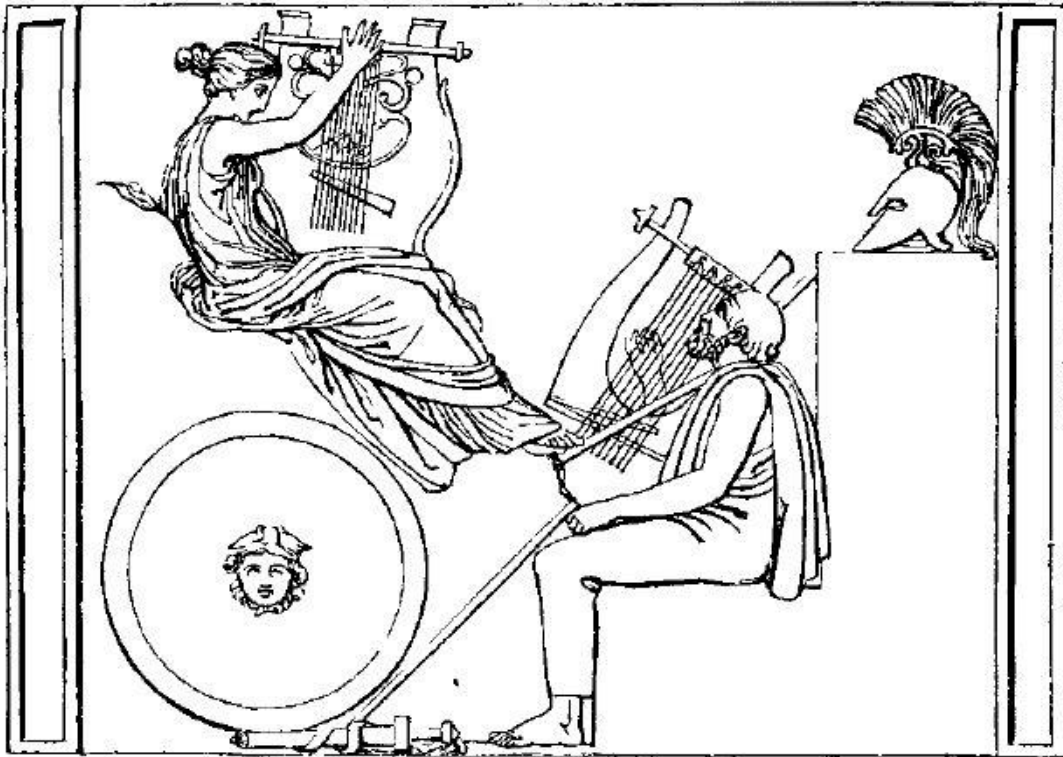
But by and by, the cause of my disease

Gives me a pang that inwardly doth sting,

When that I think what grief it is again

To live and lack the thing should rid my pain.

Ancient Poetry



HOMER INVOKING THE MUSE.

Illiad (Book One): Homer Invoking the Muse

Declare, O Muse! in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended power
Latona's son a dire contagion spread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The king of men his reverent priest defied,
And for the king's offence the people died.

For Chryses sought with costly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the victor's chain.
Suppliant the venerable father stands;
Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands
By these he begs; and lowly bending down,
Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown
He sued to all, but chief implored for grace
The brother-kings, of Atreus' royal race

“Ye kings and warriors! may your vows be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground.
May Jove restore you when your toils are o'er
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.
But, oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryseis to these arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my presents move,
And dread avenging Phoebus, son of Jove.”

The Greeks in shouts their joint assent declare,
The priest to reverence, and release the fair.
Not so Atrides; he, with kingly pride,
Repulsed the sacred sire, and thus replied:

"Hence on thy life, and fly these hostile plains,
Nor ask, presumptuous, what the king detains
Hence, with thy laurel crown, and golden rod,
Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy god.
Mine is thy daughter, priest, and shall remain;
And prayers, and tears, and bribes, shall plead in vain;
Till time shall rifle every youthful grace,
And age dismiss her from my cold embrace,
In daily labours of the loom employ'd,
Or doom'd to deck the bed she once enjoy'd
Hence then; to Argos shall the maid retire,
Far from her native soil and weeping sire."

The trembling priest along the shore return'd,
And in the anguish of a father mourn'd.
Disconsolate, not daring to complain,
Silent he wander'd by the sounding main;
Till, safe at distance, to his god he prays,
The god who darts around the world his rays.

"O Smintheus! sprung from fair Latona's line,
Thou guardian power of Cilla the divine,
Thou source of light! whom Tenedos adores,
And whose bright presence gilds thy Chrysa's shores.
If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain;
God of the silver bow! thy shafts employ,
Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy."

Thus Chryses pray'd.—the favouring power attends,
And from Olympus' lofty tops descends.
Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound;
Fierce as he moved, his silver shafts resound.
Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread,
And gloomy darkness roll'd about his head.
The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,
And hissing fly the feather'd fates below.
On mules and dogs the infection first began;
And last, the vengeful arrows fix'd in man.
For nine long nights, through all the dusky air,
The pyres, thick-flaming, shot a dismal glare.
But ere the tenth revolving day was run,
Inspired by Juno, Thetis' godlike son
Convened to council all the Grecian train;
For much the goddess mourn'd her heroes slain.
The assembly seated, rising o'er the rest,

Achilles thus the king of men address'd:

"Why leave we not the fatal Trojan shore,
And measure back the seas we cross'd before?
The plague destroying whom the sword would spare,
'Tis time to save the few remains of war.
But let some prophet, or some sacred sage,
Explore the cause of great Apollo's rage;
Or learn the wasteful vengeance to remove
By mystic dreams, for dreams descend from Jove
If broken vows this heavy curse have laid,
Let altars smoke, and hecatombs be paid.
So Heaven, atoned, shall dying Greece restore,
And Phoebus dart his burning shafts no more."

He said, and sat: when Chalcas thus replied;
Chalcas the wise, the Grecian priest and guide,
That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view,
The past, the present, and the future knew:
Uprising slow, the venerable sage
Thus spoke the prudence and the fears of age:

"Beloved of Jove, Achilles! would'st thou know
Why angry Phoebus bends his fatal bow?
First give thy faith, and plight a prince's word
Of sure protection, by thy power and sword:

For I must speak what wisdom would conceal,
And truths, invidious to the great, reveal,
Bold is the task, when subjects, grown too wise,
Instruct a monarch where his error lies;
For though we deem the short-lived fury past,
'Tis sure the mighty will revenge at last."
To whom Pelides:—"From thy inmost soul
Speak what thou know'st, and speak without control.
E'en by that god I swear who rules the day,
To whom thy hands the vows of Greece convey.
And whose bless'd oracles thy lips declare;
Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,
No daring Greek, of all the numerous band,
Against his priest shall lift an impious hand;
Not e'en the chief by whom our hosts are led,
The king of kings, shall touch that sacred head."

Encouraged thus, the blameless man replies:

"Nor vows unpaid, nor slighted sacrifice,
But he, our chief, provoked the raging pest,
Apollo's vengeance for his injured priest.
Nor will the god's awaken'd fury cease,
But plagues shall spread, and funeral fires increase,
Till the great king, without a ransom paid,
To her own Chrysa send the black-eyed maid.⁵⁴

Perhaps, with added sacrifice and prayer,
The priest may pardon, and the god may spare."

The prophet spoke: when with a gloomy frown
The monarch started from his shining throne;
Black choler fill'd his breast that boil'd with ire,
And from his eye-balls flash'd the living fire:
"Augur accursed! denouncing mischief still,
Prophet of plagues, for ever boding ill!
Still must that tongue some wounding message bring,
And still thy priestly pride provoke thy king?
For this are Phoebus' oracles explored,
To teach the Greeks to murmur at their lord?
For this with falsehood is my honour stain'd,
Is heaven offended, and a priest profaned;
Because my prize, my beauteous maid, I hold,
And heavenly charms prefer to proffer'd gold?
A maid, unmatch'd in manners as in face,
Skill'd in each art, and crown'd with every grace;
Not half so dear were Clytaemnestra's charms,
When first her blooming beauties bless'd my arms.
Yet, if the gods demand her, let her sail;
Our cares are only for the public weal:
Let me be deem'd the hateful cause of all,
And suffer, rather than my people fall.
The prize, the beauteous prize, I will resign,

So dearly valued, and so justly mine.
But since for common good I yield the fair,
My private loss let grateful Greece repair;
Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,
That he alone has fought and bled in vain."

"Insatiate king (Achilles thus replies),
Fond of the power, but fonder of the prize!
Would'st thou the Greeks their lawful prey should yield,
The due reward of many a well-fought field?
The spoils of cities razed and warriors slain,
We share with justice, as with toil we gain;
But to resume whate'er thy avarice craves
(That trick of tyrants) may be borne by slaves.
Yet if our chief for plunder only fight,
The spoils of Ilion shall thy loss requite,
Whene'er, by Jove's decree, our conquering powers
Shall humble to the dust her lofty towers."

Then thus the king:

"Shall I my prize resign
With tame content, and thou possess'd of thine?
Great as thou art, and like a god in fight,
Think not to rob me of a soldier's right.
At thy demand shall I restore the maid?

First let the just equivalent be paid;
Such as a king might ask; and let it be
A treasure worthy her, and worthy me.
Or grant me this, or with a monarch's claim
This hand shall seize some other captive dame.
The mighty Ajax shall his prize resign;
Ulysses' spoils, or even thy own, be mine.
The man who suffers, loudly may complain;
And rage he may, but he shall rage in vain.
But this when time requires.—It now remains
We launch a bark to plough the watery plains,
And waft the sacrifice to Chrysa's shores,
With chosen pilots, and with labouring oars.
Soon shall the fair the sable ship ascend,
And some deputed prince the charge attend:
This Creta's king, or Ajax shall fulfil,
Or wise Ulysses see perform'd our will;
Or, if our royal pleasure shall ordain,
Achilles' self conduct her o'er the main;
Let fierce Achilles, dreadful in his rage,
The god propitiate, and the pest assuage."

